

**Eastern Madera County  
Emergency Preparedness Committee  
Meeting Summary  
January 13, 2011  
Sierra Ambulance Training Headquarters-Oakhurst, CA**

**Meeting Attendees:** Chris Dragoo, Denise Emler, Chris Ferbrache, Ed Guzman, Gary Hampy, David Konno, Jere Miller, Katrina Poitras, Dick Rekart, Bernie Smith, Jerry Thompson, Dave Wolin

**Meeting called to order:** 0740

**Committee Introductions:**

**Old Business**

**New Business**

A power point presentation was given by Joseph Wilder, Madera County Deputy Sheriff focusing on the recovery of a young man who drowned in Chiquita Creek. Until recently most drownings have occurred at Angel Falls. However, there has been increase in drownings at Chiquita Creek; three just last year. All had been within a mile of each other. Agencies responding for search and rescue were Madera County Sheriff's Office (dive and rope team), Madera County Fire Department, and the US Forest Service. One of the tools used for recovery was a shepherd's type hook made by MARSARS Water System Rescue. Unsuccessful attempts were made weekly. The final attempt was successful two months later by diverting the water, using sand bags, pumps, and the permanent installation of anchors points. A discussion ensued regarding the balance of state budget cuts and the man hours spent for this recovery. It was noted that most of the man hours were specialized volunteers and many of the county staff buy recovery gear out of their own pocket. As Angel Falls has an average of one death per year, the Sheriff's Office developed pre-plans for search and rescue with the assistance of Sierra Ambulance and CAL FIRE. More than likely pre-plans will be created for Chiquita Creek. The committee discussed the possibility of posted warning signs that might help people become more aware of the dangers, noting that Sequoia National Park hands out awareness packets to visitors to the park for safety precautions. There is a sign posted at Angel Falls stating great caution advised but will most likely be removed due to its underlying admittance of liability.

Today was Bernie Smith's last meeting. She will be retiring at the end of the month. She was given a certificate from the Chamber of Commerce conveying the professionalism, leadership, and support that she has given to our mountain community for emergency preparedness.

Bernie reports that CAHAN is still a possibility. The department received \$1million in grant funding this past year. Slated to be completed by the end of the year will be fit testing equipment, distance learning for schools, workforce protection seminars, CHAMPS will continue, the completion of the training manual, and the use of three churches for community

resource centers. CHEMPACs are currently stored at Children's Hospital. There will be training on January 26<sup>th</sup> to detail the transfer if Fresno should need it. She notes that the Web EOC tabletop went very well last October.

Denise Emler states that Kaiser will be working on dates for formal training for CAHAN.

Dave Wolin reports that there will be a new radio station in Oakhurst that can be utilized for announcements such as flu clinics.

**Next Meeting:** February 10, 2011

**Meeting adjourned at:** 9:00 am

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Hayes